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New Hampshire FSA Newsletter

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www.fsa.usda.gov/nh

USDA Climate Hub Building Block: Conservation of Sensitive Lands

USDA Climate Hubs are working with producers, ranchers, pasture and forest landowners to effectively partner in ways to help reduce climate change. To aid in this partnership, USDA established the 10 Building Blocks for Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry.

One such Building Block is the "Conservation of Sensitive Lands". The term "sensitive lands" denotes soils and landscapes that are valuable due to properties (e.g., high organic matter, wet hydrology) and/or function (e.g., wildlife habitat, filtration, and hydrologic storage). Typical examples of these soils are organic rich histosols, floodplains, or wetlands along riparian areas. Properties and functions of these soils are easily disrupted from agricultural or urban land use.

Sensitive lands that are used for agricultural production can be protected by changes in land use (long-term cover). This reduction in land use intensity can provide multiple environmental benefits, including substantial greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation that occurs as carbon is sequestered or preserved in soils and vegetation. When land is removed from crop production, several activities—including tillage, nitrogen fertilization, and energy use—are substantially reduced or eliminated, generating additional GHG mitigation.

FSA and NRCS are committed to identifying these sensitive lands and encouraging landowners, farmers, and ranchers to voluntarily adopt conservation systems--using financial and technical assistance--to generate

GHG benefits. To read more about Conservation of Sensitive Lands, click the following link:
http://www.usda.gov/oce/climate_change/building_blocks/4_SensitiveLands.pdf

For more information about the USDA Climate Hubs click here:
<http://www.climatehubs.oce.usda.gov/>

USDA Extends Margin Protection Program for Dairy Enrollment Deadline

USDA announced that it will extend the deadline for dairy producers to enroll in the Margin Protection Program (MPP) for Dairy to Dec. 16, 2016, from the previous deadline of Sept. 30. This voluntary dairy safety net program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating dairy producers when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the producer. A USDA web tool, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool, allows dairy producers to calculate levels of coverage available from MPP based on price projections.

Emergency Conservation Program Assistance Available in Five New Hampshire Counties

The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) provides emergency funding and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters and to implement emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought.

In New Hampshire, Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, Sullivan, and Cheshire counties are eligible for ECP assistance due to severe drought conditions. ECP cost-share assistance is available if the damage is so severe that water for livestock, orchards and vineyards has been reduced below normal to the extent that neither can survive without additional water.

Qualifying producers can receive cost share assistance not to exceed 75 percent of the eligible cost of restoration measures for permanent measures. Cost shares for temporary measures is based on 50 percent of the cost of installing eligible temporary measures. Cost sharing on up to 90 percent of eligible expenses may be authorized for limited resource producers. Limited resource provisions may vary by County. Local Service Centers can help determine appropriate cost share levels. For more information on Limited Resource Producers see <http://lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/>. Cost-share assistance is limited to \$200,000 per person or legal entity per natural disaster.

Approved practices and measures may include installing pipelines or other facilities for livestock water or existing irrigation systems for orchards and vineyards, constructing and deepening wells for livestock water and developing springs or seeps for livestock water.

Producers who have experienced severe drought conditions and require outside assistance to provide supplemental emergency livestock water should contact their local FSA Office.

To be eligible for cost share assistance, conservation practices should not be initiated until a request has been filed and approved at the FSA County Office and the County Committee or a representative

has completed an onsite inspection of the problem area. The County Committee will review the inspection findings when considering the request for cost share assistance.

For more information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

New Hampshire Counties are Eligible for Emergency Loans

Belknap, Coos, Carroll, Cheshire, Grafton, Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, Sullivan, and Strafford Counties were either declared a primary or contiguous disaster due to drought using the streamlined Secretarial Disaster Designation process. Under this designation, producers with operations in any primary or contiguous county are eligible to apply for low interest emergency loans.

The streamlined disaster designation process issues a drought disaster declaration when a county has experienced a drought intensity value of D3 or at least a D2 (severe drought) level for eight consecutive weeks based on the U.S. Drought Monitor during the crop year.

Emergency loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding and other natural disasters or quarantine.

Producers have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. Producers can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of \$500,000.

For more information about emergency loans, please contact your local FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Loans for Targeted Underserved Producers

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or to purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, FSA has provided priority funding for members of targeted underserved applicants.

A targeted underserved applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, targeted underserved groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).